

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH January 10, 2006

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:30 p.m. in the Jr. - Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Bill Clay, Paul McFadden, William Munroe, and Frank Maher. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; Principal Denise Boulé; Vice Principal James Alves, and Attorney Nick Gorham were present. Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo arrived at 8:00 p.m. Student Representative Emily DeCristofano was absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Chair DeSack moved to go into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 and in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5(a)(8) for Student Disciplinary Hearing, written notice having been provided to the individual informing him/her of the right to hold the hearing in open session. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 7 - 0.

Meeting moved to Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:00 p.m.

A vote was taken during Executive Session to continue the suspension until the end of the 3rd quarter and to refer the student to counseling. Voted 7 – 0.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting back to order in open session in accordance with RIGL 42-46-2(b) at 8:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

OPEN FORUM – Member Clay requested the Superintendent provide members with a School Committee Presentation Schedule for 2006.

Chair DeSack read the District Mission Statement.

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – None – Chair DeSack reported Student Member Emily DeCristofano informed the Superintendent's office she would not be in attendance at tonight's meeting.

Member Maher moved to move up agenda item VII. New Business, A. Request to Reschedule Foreign Exchange Trip to France. Seconded by Member Clay.

Voted 7 – 0.

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NEW BUSINESS – Request to Reschedule Foreign Exchange Trip to France – Senior High School foreign language teacher René Boudreault explained a foreign exchange trip to France had previously been cancelled due to civil unrest in France and requested School Committee consent to reschedule the trip.

Member Clay reported that as of January 1, 2006, France has lifted the state of emergency they had in place in November of 2005.

Vice Chair Cicero moved to sanction the Foreign Exchange Trip to France. Seconded by Member Maher.

Discussion – Member Munroe referenced an enclosed letter from Attorney Gorham relating to tonight's agenda item, Legal Ruling Regarding Sanctioned Student Travel and explained its contents. He expressed his concerns regarding whether the district holds the appropriate liability insurance coverage should there be a mishap during student travel.

Chair DeSack reminded members that the packet provided to members at the last meeting gave details that insurance is in place.

Members Munroe and McFadden voiced concerns and made comments regarding the school district assuring appropriate liability insurance is in place for student travel and whether or not it is necessary for committee members to sanction student travel.

Vice Chair Cicero emphasized that this trip was different because this is a delineated foreign exchange program trip.

Chair DeSack said she felt it is necessary to have the policy committee address this issue so the members do not have to have a lengthy discussion every time student travel requests come before the committee. She repeated the motion on the table to sanction the Foreign Exchange Trip to France. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0. Motion carried.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member Clay requested agenda item V., B., 5. Recalls, a. Linda Gaulin as .05 FTE Elementary Teacher, Salary \$16,764.76, for the Remainder to the 2005-2006 Academic Year, effective January 3, 2006 be pulled from the consent agenda.

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Member Maher requested agenda item V., A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of December 6, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda.

Member McFadden moved to accept the consent agenda with items, V., B., 5. Recalls, a. Linda Gaulin as .05 FTE Elementary Teacher, Salary \$16,764.76, for the Remainder to the 2005-2006 Academic Year, effective January 3, 2006 and V., A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of December 6, 2005 pulled. Seconded by Member Maher.

Voted 7 – 0.

The following items were approved:

A. Minutes – Executive Session Minutes of December 6, 2005, Budget Workshop Minutes of December 10, 2005

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

- a. Hans Coker as Head Junior High School Wrestling Coach, Stipend \$ 2,482.00, for the 2005-2006 season, effective January 10, 2006**

2. Leaves of absence

3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with

Regret)

- a. Letter of Resignation from Rich Duggan as Sr. High School Girls' Volleyball Head Coach, with regret, effective December 16, 2005**

4. Grievances

5. Recalls

C. Bills – In the amount of \$353,965.16

D. Home School Approvals

- 1. Lamers – Adam, Andrew**
- 2. Edwards – Elizabeth, Jacqueline**
- 3. Carpenter – Joshua, Laura, Leah, Kristen**
- 4. Stracensky - Henry**

End Consent Agenda

Superintendent Seitsinger read the list of Correspondence.

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- E. Correspondence – (1) Information from Sodexho Regarding Backpackers Program, (2) E-mail from Jr.-Sr. High School Band Teacher Gregg Charest Regarding N.E. Honors Band, (3) 2004 and**

2005 District/School Report Cards, (4) EWG Summary of SALT Survey

Indicators, (5) Fall 2005 FOCUS Newsletter, (6) Memo to the Superintendent from Principal Boulé Regarding High School After School Programs,

(7) Letter from Attorney Gorham to Attorney General Patrick Lynch Regarding Open Forum, (8) Letters and Enclosures sent to Metcalf and Wawaloam Students regarding Packages sent to Troops Stationed in Iraq, (8) Letters and Enclosures sent to Metcalf and Wawaloam Students regarding Packages sent to Troops Stationed in Iraq, (9) Confidential Memo to School Committee Members from Superintendent Seitsinger regarding Student Updates

MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS – Superintendent – None

Special Education – Members McFadden and Clay made inquiries relating to Special Education enrollment figures. Member Clay requested Special Education enrollment figures reporting also include October figures. Member McFadden requested Special Education enrollment be brought to the next agenda for discussion; however he conveyed this subject matter may fall under tonight's agenda item G. Monthly Budget Projection 2005 – 2006 and may be discussed at that time and may not need to be placed on the next agenda.

Business - None

Curriculum – Member Clay requested Curriculum Director’s Status Report items

2. Mathematics Three-Year Plan and 3. Personal Literacy Plans be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

Maintenance – Member Clay recommended forwarding copies of the enclosed Maintenance Report, showing pictures of district buildings’ roofs, to Exeter and West Greenwich Town Council members. He commented that this report was a very appropriate presentation.

MONTHLY BUDGET PROJECTION 2005 – 2006 – Member McFadden asked for an explanation as to why the Special Education Department is over budget.

Ms. DeCrescenzo gave a summary of the number of students receiving services she had projected for last year; and the actual number of students receiving services reported in her monthly status reports thus far this academic year. Her overview detailed fluctuating monthly increases and decreases over a five-month period. She explained she will report

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additional, more detailed enrollment data tomorrow night at the

Special Education Budget Workshop.

Chair DeSack, Member McFadden, and Ms. DeCrescenzo further discussed last year's Special Education student enrollment figures, the current year's enrollment increase percentage, and the fairness of gauging percentage increases. Chair DeSack asked Member McFadden if this discussion answered his questions, as far as to transfer this issue to the next agenda for discussion. Member McFadden confirmed his questions were answered and there was no need to add this item to the next agenda.

Member McFadden, Director of Administration Robert Ross, and Superintendent Seitsinger discussed the background of a budget overage in the High School Foreign Language Department and district policy and contract language for replacing certified staff on a leave of absence.

Member Clay made inquiry to a \$65,000 Special Services Support and Psych Services charge. Ms. DeCrescenzo reported, following approval of last year's budget, staffing was removed from each department; after reviewing regulations, it became necessary to reinstate these positions. Therefore, there was not an increase but a reinstatement. Also, the support services department experienced changes in two job share positions. Two job share teachers took back their days, they are at a higher step than the teacher they job shared with. This action represents a .6 line item increase.

Member Clay and Mr. Ross discussed budget items General Instruction at Wawaloam and Metcalf. Mr. Ross reported two changes in non-certified and in teacher salaries. He explained the difficulty in forecasting this area of the budget due to the unpredictability of leaves of absences and the salary changes due to the steps of teachers on leave and teachers filling in for those on leave.

Member Clay expressed his concerns regarding deficits and emphasized the need to live within the budget agreed upon, and the need to save money for the reserve fund.

Member McFadden, Director of Administration Robert Ross, and Superintendent Seitsinger briefly discussed Medicaid and whether or not a clerk had been hired for Medicaid collections. Mr. Ross gave details relating to the Medicaid line, and Superintendent Seitsinger clarified there were requests made in the previous two budgets for clerical staffing however; these were not related to Medicaid collections.

Vice Chair Cicero moved to move up agenda item VIII. B. EWG Sports 4 Kids – Track Project. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0.

EWG Sports 4 Kids – Track Project – Parent volunteer Rob Correia reported, plans are moving forward nicely to apply for the RI DEM Recreation Grant by next weeks

deadline. Mr. Correia reported both West Greenwich Town Council and Exeter Town Council have endorsed this project. He explained, in order to complete the application two items are needed, (1) School Committee approval of the public right-of-way to the site from Route 3, as indicated on the map provided to the district's attorney, (2) EWG Sports 4 Kids has been working on a Recreational Easement Agreement between EWG School District and the towns of West Greenwich and Exeter, which specifies public access to the site, including clarification of details such as, school activities taking precedence, maintenance, insurance, police detail, etc. He explained an outline has been provided to Superintendent Seitsinger, Attorney Gorham, and Senator Breene for their review. He referred to it as a "document coming together".

Chair DeSack asked if these two items were needed immediately to apply for the grant on time. Attorney Gorham explained the group needs an agreement that the public will have access to the track in order to get funding from the RI DEM. He said Mr. Correia has provided him with a proposal for the access which he will put in a form that he believes will be acceptable to the School Committee for their signature at the next School Committee meeting.

Chair DeSack asked if that will be within the timeframe, as the next

School Committee meeting is on January 24, 2006. Attorney Gorham said that would be sufficient for their application. And Mr. Correia asked members to provide the resolution calling for the public right-of-way from Route 3 to the site to submit with their application next week. He said the recreation lease agreement can be sent as an amendment at a later date.

Chair DeSack commented she expected Attorney Gorham would have provided documentation detailing specifics about the right-of-way for members to review at tonight's meeting.

Member McFadden expressed his opinion that the deadline date is nearing, this is a noble cause, and both town councils have approved of the project, and he recommended providing EWG Sports 4 Kids with whatever they need.

Superintendent Seitsinger said he supported Member McFadden's opinion of not wanting to block the process, acknowledged Chair DeSack's request for language to review, and asked Attorney Gorham to give an example, so it can be quoted in the minutes, of what the language (motion) would be for the public right-of-way document, which is what is needed for the application process to go forward immediately.

Attorney Gorham gave the following example - referring to it as an easement from the school district to the Town of West Greenwich in

one document – Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District, being in control of this property by law, does hereby convey to the Town of West Greenwich, an easement from Nooseneck Hill Road

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to the track, specifically shown on a certified plan dated such-and-such a date. The easement remains in effect until the track otherwise ceases to be used by the public. Attorney Gorham emphasized his opinion that the DEM’s main issue with funding this project is ensuring public access.

Chair DeSack expressed her feelings that this is not a simple matter and there are several issues to consider, such as traffic patterns, parking, and public accessibility during school hours, etc.,. She said she is not in the habit of voting on an issue before reviewing detailed documentation.

Member McFadden agreed that Chair DeSack expressed good points, but said he does not want to jeopardize the funding EWG Sports 4 Kids is attempting to get from the RI DEM. He then asked Mr. Correia, “What, at this point, do you need from us?”

Mr. Correia said his group needs EWG School Committee to agree to give the Town of West Greenwich a public right-of-way to the site;

which will include a right-of-way during school hours and after school hours.

Attorney Gorham explained he thought at tonight's meeting members were only planning to authorize him to draw up documentation for their approval and execution at the next meeting. Members and Attorney Gorham further discussed the need to make a motion to agree to grant a right-of-way to the track facility and the wording of it. Members commented and gave their views regarding what the motion should say. Chair DeSack asked Attorney Gorham to give a verbal example of what the motion should say.

Attorney Gorham gave the following example: To direct/authorize Attorney Gorham to prepare an Easement and Use Agreement Lease with the Town of West Greenwich; granting access to and use of the track as proposed in the EWG Sports 4 Kids application to the RIDEM, and make the granting of the lease subject to the application being granted by the RIDEM.

Member Munroe expressed his opinion that members should review documentation prior to voting. Chair DeSack explained the group needs an agreement that the School Committee will grant an easement and that is all. She said if the committee agrees to go forward it will need to overcome hurdles somehow.

Chair DeSack moved to agree to grant the Town of West Greenwich a

public right-of-way from Route 3 to the track facilities for public access pending approval of the Grant. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.

MONTHLY SUB COMMITTEE REPORT – Policy Committee Report –
Member Clay referenced the policy committee report provided to members and gave a brief overview of it.

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Joint Meeting-Report/Discussion – Chair DeSack explained she asked this item be added to tonight's agenda because of a discussion had at the last joint meeting regarding suggested actions being reviewed at School Committee meetings, in order to determine which items to take action on. She recommended at the end of each future joint meeting, creating an action items list to review and discuss at a future School Committee meeting so members may vote whether or not to take action. Consensus of the committee was they were in agreement with Chair DeSacks's recommendation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS-Legal Ruling Regarding Sanctioned Student Travel –

Chair DeSack explained Attorney Gorham's response letter regarding this issue was already discussed earlier on in tonight's meeting during agenda item, Request to Reschedule Foreign Exchange Trip to France. She directed the policy committee to create

a policy to address this issue, as this topic has been discussed several times over the past six School Committee meetings. Member Maher reported the policy committee is presently working on a policy and anticipates it will be finished soon. Member Munroe asked that the policy include data to answer questions he has pertaining to whether or not the district has adequate liability insurance coverage. The policy committee will add this item to a future School Committee agenda when it is complete.

2004-2005 Money Held Back by Exeter – Attorney Gorham gave a brief reiteration of the hearing he had previously reported on at the November 22nd School Committee meeting. He explained the RI Association of School Superintendents plans to submit a Friend of the Court Brief on behalf of the district and that he had finished the district's brief in November. Attorney Gorham reported the Judge did not set a timeframe for this case, and emphasized the need to get this issue settled as the District Financial Meeting is 4-months away. He explained this case is currently before Superior Court, and both Exeter Town Council and the School Committee have moved for summary judgment. Attorney Gorham said this case is in the judge's hands and he believes the judge is ready to make a decision. Attorney Gorham confirmed, should either party decide to move to another court, the next step would be Supreme Court which typically involves a one-year process.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Chair DeSack reverted back to items pulled from the consent agenda.

Member Maher requested agenda item V., A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of

December 6, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda. He referenced page 3, UNFINISHED BUSINESS – 8th Grade Quebec Trip Proposal , specifically - Voted 4 – 1 – 1. Member Maher voted no, and clarified his reason for voting no was not because he did not support the trip but because, similar to Member McFadden’s reason for abstention, he wanted to review Attorney Gorham’s legal ruling regarding sanctioned student travel prior to voting.

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Superintendent Seitsinger explained there is no need to amend the December 6, 2005 minutes, as tonight’s minutes will provide explanation as to why Member Maher voted no.

Member Clay requested agenda item V., B., 5. Recalls, a. Linda Gaulin as .05 FTE Elementary Teacher, Salary \$16,764.76, for the Remainder to the 2005-2006 Academic Year, effective January 3, 2006 be pulled from the consent agenda. He referenced an enclosed confidential memo and said its contents indicate the district is taking on a FTE.

Superintendent Seitsinger confirmed this to be correct but explained the district has the ability to return this employee to temporary lay-off status upon completion of this long-term obligation.

Member Clay moved to approve V., A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of December 6, 2005 and V., B., 5. Recalls, a. Linda Gaulin as .05 FTE Elementary Teacher, Salary \$16,764.76, for the Remainder to the 2005-2006 Academic Year, effective January 3, 2006. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 7 – 0.

Chair DeSack asked, if members are in agreement, to see SAT Program Update on the next agenda. This item will be place on the next agenda.

Member McFadden requested members discuss an increase of property insurance coverage at the High School for this fiscal year at its next School Committee meeting. This item will be placed on the next agenda.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – January 11, 2006 – Special Education Budget Workshop, January 11, 2006 – Emergency Response Committee Meeting,

January 16, 2006 – Martin Luther King Day, January 17, 2006 – Elementary Budget Workshop, January 19, 2006 – Jr. High School Budget Workshop,

**January 23, 2006 – Districtwide/Facilities/Athletics Budget Workshop,
January 24, 2006 – School Committee Meeting, January 24, 2006 –
School Lunch Advisory Committee Meeting**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Chair DeSack moved to go into Executive Session at

9:15 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5(a) (9) for the purpose of discussion regarding collective bargaining agreement - Grievances. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 7 – 0.

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:31 p.m.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 11:05 p.m.

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Chair DeSack called the meeting back to order in open session in accordance with RIGL 42-46-2(b) at 11:15 p.m.

No votes were taken during Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT– Member Clay moved to adjourn at 11:15 p.m. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 7 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO
CLERK